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**Minutes  
City Council's  
Central City District Committee of the Whole  
"Town Hall Meeting"  
January 20, 2007**

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**Minutes of the Tempe City Council's Central City District Committee of the Whole Town Hall Meeting, held on Saturday, January 20, 2007, 9:30 a.m., in the Library Program Room, Tempe Public Library, 3500 S. Rural Road, Tempe, Arizona.**

**Committee Members Present:**

Mayor Hugh Hallman  
Vice Mayor Hut Hutson  
Councilmember P Ben Arredondo  
Councilmember Barbara J. Carter  
Councilmember Shana Ellis  
Councilmember Mark W. Mitchell  
Councilmember Onnie Shekerjian

***Mayor Hallman called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m. He introduced Councilmembers and asked members of the Parks and Recreation Board and the Rio Salado Advisory Commission to stand.***

**Land Use Vision for Significant Tempe-Owned Areas**

Mayor Hallman summarized that the goal for today's meeting was to have a true community conversation about what our community vision would be for some specific areas of real estate of public interest. As we go forward through a formal RFP process or any kind of planning for the system, ultimately there are rules and regulations that make it Council's responsibility to make final determinations and, in certain circumstances, to keep some information confidential. With that said, our goal is to have a wholesome discussion with our community about the vision for these properties.

Mayor Hallman showed proposals beginning in 2001 through 2005. The last time this community broad-brushed a conversation was in 1998-1999. The result was a 50 foot long piece of paper that rolled out across the wall that had all the parks and big visions, none of which has been accomplished, and we started being deluged with proposals for projects. We got off track in trying to keep the community connected. Ultimately, the community determined that the Center for the Arts should go west of Tempe Beach Park, which fundamentally changed

the underlying assumption of open space and public activity space. That is probably what brings us here today. The interim steps did not get well taken, not by anyone's fault, as small steps were taken away from that 1999 vision. We are here today to listen, but we also have to provide information on things we have experienced or heard, what our staff knows and understands, things about what's going on with the riverbed, and what's going on with the Center for the Arts.

Mayor Hallman summarized the general facts. It begins with the property from the Arts Center to Priest Road and the property from Priest Road to the edge of our community. There's a piece of property in the middle, 37 acres, immediately to the west of the Arts Center, then 18 acres with SRP, then about 50 more acres the City holds from the Vortac, and then some that we push off the map because it is imposed upon by the aircraft overflights. There's also the Priest Yard that we haven't dealt with much, in part because it is an active facility. It's about a \$16M to \$20M problem to fix if we want to do something with that real estate other than what's being done there now. That property should be in this discussion, but we have to take into consideration as a Council and staff what kind of money we have to accomplish the things we want to accomplish. The property to the west of the Center for the Arts over to Priest Road, with the exception of Priest Yard, is really something we want to see used as an arts district or something synergistic with the Center for the Arts. The property west of Priest Road has been designated as a place we want to make our stand for youth and amateur sports.

Vice Mayor Hutson stated that he could not agree that the property west of Priest should be designated as youth and amateur sports. He has always found that when he tried to dictate to the market as to what should be done or built, that he loses. He would like to see that remain open because we can't tell when someone with a large facility that will either have multiple rooms or hire a thousand people will come in and want to build something. He would like to keep the options open in that area.

Mayor Hallman clarified that Vice Mayor Hutson's point would be that this not be designated as real estate with a specific purpose but that it perhaps be put out on the market to see what kinds of offers come in. That could mean then that the money could be used to provide other kinds of park amenities, including youth and amateur sports. That conversation took place through the 1999 process that everything west of Priest would be "exploited" so that we would sell this property and use the cash from that effort to support the other projects, including youth and amateur sports and we might have a better place to put it.

There was a question about current zoning.

Mayor Hallman responded that the zoning is Industrial. As City property, one might imagine we have some inside track to rezoning it to the way we might want to have it rezoned.

Councilmember Arredondo stated that he was not here as a business person to make money. He's here to protect the community. He believes there are certain areas that have to be designated up front as open space. This community isn't here to be built out to see what we can get. We have parcels on Apache Boulevard, as well. He is here to govern open space to make sure kids and youth, sports, playgrounds, some open spaces, stay open. He didn't have a problem leaving it open.

Mayor Hallman continued that in the interim period when this entire area was designated first open space and then for sale or use to generate resources, this 25 acres ultimately did get put up for sale. That's where the outdoor activity arenas and youth parks were going to be. Ultimately, it went to SunCor for about \$9M and that money is then being used as seed money to start the boathouse, the park between the bridges, some art center elements, and some other projects. He felt that was Vice Mayor Hutson's point that we might follow that model again, but it sounds like a general sense in the community that even if that were sold for \$50M, we should still keep it as open space regardless of whether we could get a big chunk of money.

Mayor Hallman asked for a show of hands for it to be left open space and to see if there are some private uses that would raise substantial funds. There was a show of hands in support.

Councilmember Shekerjian asked for clarification on what Vice Mayor Hutson said. Her interpretation was that we wouldn't abandon the idea of use for youth and amateur sports in terms of promoting that idea for our community, but that possibly by selling part of that property we would be able then to not dip into the general fund as greatly as we might otherwise have to do in order to provide those kinds of amenities.

Vice Mayor Hutson responded that the market will dictate if that's a good opportunity for youth and amateur sports. It might be youth and amateur sports, it might not. He wouldn't want to close the doors to any good offer to benefit the community.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that her understanding in past conversations with Vice Mayor Hutson was that he was supportive of youth and amateur sports being promoted in the community, so it's not an "either/or" situation.

Councilmember Mitchell stated that part of the job as a Councilmember is to set Council's vision and policy and have staff help implement that vision and policy. Council has a strong history of setting a vision of the types of uses throughout the City, and staff and residents have helped achieve those visions. This is a better community for it. In some ways, the market will dictate it, and with the designation of this property as Industrial, it could go either way. It's up to the Council. What we're trying to do today is set a vision of what we would like to see there. He is a strong advocate for youth and amateur sports which has an economic benefit that will help diversify our economy for generations to come. It's important for Tempeans. We are committed to the parks in our community and we are committed to open space, and this will help achieve a lot of points we are trying to get across that will benefit the community in the long run. This discussion is good, but at the same time, he didn't want it to limit us in any way. We are just trying to set a vision of what the Council and community would like as a whole in the areas we are discussing today. We should keep options open, but at the same time, Council commits a policy to the types of uses that we are looking for.

Mayor Hallman clarified that his point would be that it is open and Councilmember Arredondo's point is that our goal is to make it open space. Perhaps what we are looking for, with an open space view toward this, is what that open space should be. Is it still generally the community's view that the parcels to the west of Priest are for youth and amateur sports, and the parcels between the Center for the Arts and Priest are for arts-related uses? He asked if there were any objections.

There were no objections.

**Bill Butler, Tempe**, suggested combining these two thoughts so we have an area along the river, get some water in there, let it resurrect itself, and then use the rest for sports.

Mayor Hallman responded that the riparian area to the west of the dam is currently under construction for exactly that. We are installing a pipe which will carry approximately 15M gallons of water per day that Mesa is dumping into the riverbed around to that side of the Lake to re-vegetate that riparian space. We also have to take into consideration the airport which is 10,000 ft. to the west of that riparian area. We need to work with the airport to make sure that it considers the airport's needs and concerns. There is point of view that birds near the airport fly up and down, and that birds farther away from the airport only fly horizontally with the horizon so they are never a problem for airplanes. That's why they don't worry about them in the 10,000 foot zone.

**Mark Lymer, Tempe**, stated that on the east side of Mill, there is a lot of stuff going on. He didn't know if there is any open space over there. On the west side of Mill, there's Tempe Beach, which is actually fairly small, and the Center for the Arts, a lot of parking, and some other land on the west side. There is also the airport. He just served on the Aviation Commission. He used to live on 3<sup>rd</sup> and Beck for many years and when a plane flew over, you stop talking if you are outside. Basically, there's a strategy to see outdoor sports there because of noise and jet fuel, etc. but that is the crumbiest piece of land for kids to be playing on. To have an indoor use with filtered air is acceptable, but it's not an outdoor area for retail or recreation west of Priest.

Mayor Hallman clarified that if we are going down the road for youth and amateur sports, we need to be cognizant of the noise levels and aircraft fuel issues in that area.

**Scott Burge, Tempe**, stated that he has lived in Tempe for a long time, and Tempe has changed. We have to think of Tempe a hundred years from now. Rome was founded in 753 BC and it's 2700 years old. Would they like some parks right now? We let the genie out of the bottle when these towers went in. We have to start thinking of this more like Central Park and Golden Gate Park because there will be more residences down there and it's not going to stop for the next hundred years. There is a happy medium and that is to do what Vice Mayor Hutson said. We talked about it on the Rio Salado Commission for years, and that is to lease the land. Of course that land is probably not good for youth and amateur sports, but it may be a hundred years from now. The airport won't be there 2,000 years from now, but Tempe will. There's nothing that you can't lease that you can't get back and use those lease payments to build something in the interim. It's all here. You have to keep it open space, but you have to think open space not tomorrow, but fifty years from now. Then you can pull it out and do what you want. Once those buildings go up, you will see skyscrapers all the way around.

There was a request to explain the SRP swath to everyone.

Mayor Hallman added that he thought the point Mr. Lymer was making was to point out that the land along the south side of the river between the east dam and Mill Avenue had been designated as far back as 1996 as commercial/residential. The plan is to generate the money to pay for the Lake amenities. This node at Scottsdale Road south of the freeway had that

same kind of designation, but there is open space and parks built throughout that area, and linear parks and other nodes to create open space recreational areas for the people who decide to live here and those in our older neighborhoods as well. In that context, we are now working very diligently to reclaim Papago Park as part of this open space heritage. There are 2000 acres of open space that we are not utilizing effectively. Mr. Mitchell, Ms. Carter, and Mr. Hutson have been working on efforts to get a regional cooperative movement to rehabilitate and preserve Papago Park as part of our park system. The "genie out of the bottle" of this urban downtown is bringing people here, but all of this together is what we are trying to plan. Today's exercise is about the public space owned by the City that we have left. There is a strip here that is not owned by the City. It is 18 acres. We have, as a Council, made policy requests on SRP that that property be viewed as part of this entire effort to plan it, and that SRP not move forward with something that just looks at that 18 acres as a standalone project, but that it has to be done holistically with all of this. His hope would be to craft visions together to help us go back to SRP and seek to integrate that land as part of this effort. He asked what kinds of things should be part of that, part of an arts district, and part of a youth and amateur sports area.

A Rio Salado commissioner stated that he wanted to talk about the arts district. The RFP for the arts-related district was concerning for the Rio Salado Commission because it involved residential use and, to the Commission, open space meant public access. The arts-related district needs to have public accessibility. But by just leaving it open space, what happens in fifty years?

Mayor Hallman responded that from the Council's perspective, that RFP did include a reference to residential with the notion that we could consider elements where a residence was appropriate, for example, for on-site artists who had studios. That was the notion. It was not that this should become an additional opportunity for large residential projects. That was not communicated well enough through the RFP and certainly not into the community, but that was the Council's understanding of what that meant. We would consider elements that would include residential specifically to the extent it supported the broader use of a public arts district that would be an opportunity to bring the public into the space. In addition, we do know that there is a riparian area being constructed in the river bottom. Our goal over time is that any project on that arts district parcel should relate to both sides of the parcel, both the Rio Salado side on a frontage approach, and also to the north side to include that riparian area and access to it as part of our parks system so it not be walled off to become a riparian area under glass.

**Sharon Sutherland, Tempe**, asked what is meant by "market"? She thought the purpose of government was to protect the interests of the people who live here now. The market might be more developers, more condos for people coming in from somewhere else. It's already getting difficult to see the lake from the butte. She agreed with Mr. Burge's comments in the sense of the City keeping control of this so that the City always has that choice and not selling it off and being held hostage by whatever is there.

Mayor Hallman asked whether it is Council's notion that we are not talking about fee transfers, not permanent sale of the property in any context, that any use of this will be only lease concepts? For example, we have a piece of property the City owned immediately adjacent to Tempe Beach Park, and this Council learned its lesson very well. It's the site immediately west of the old Ash Avenue bridge alignment where the Center for Habilitation used to have its offices. We actually transferred title to that property and then TCH sold that property for \$1.2M,

much to our grave regrets, and we would have repurchased it for that amount, but instead it got into private hands and now we have no ability to control what happens there. If we own it, leasing is an option. This gives rise to Mr. Burge's point that we may get some cash flow out of it now to build some things we currently want and then wait for an opportunity when aircraft actually fly in and out of Sky Harbor silently.

Vice Mayor Hutson clarified that the term "market" doesn't mean an industrial site. The "market" is market. It could be youth and amateur sports, a hotel, or a park, so it's the market. When he says "market", he's not talking about some industrial company buying it up.

**Sue Lofgren, Tempe**, stated that the Rio Salado Commission struggled over that piece of property and came to realize that Tempe Beach Park has been loved to death. In order to give it a little respite, the Commission has said that a use of some of that area could be an overflow area for events, some type of open space area that could host major events that don't need a lake background. That area could include an appropriate parking facility, since parking is getting worse and worse. That would be a prime use in the Commission's eyes.

Mayor Hallman stated that was the reason Council started last March with the process to look at every event in Tempe Beach Park and how the park was being overused. In fact, when we made our list of priorities, we determined it was clear there were certain events that just didn't fit with what we were doing and were overusing the park. We came to the consensus, for example, that AVP, the volleyball tournament, did not fit with what we were doing and it was using the park for a huge chunk of the available time. The irony is that when we suggested helping them find another location, rather than have us assist, they convinced someone that they were being stolen and they then caused the community to pay lots of money to steal them from the City of Tempe. That's what regional communication does. If you don't communicate, you overpay for things that other people are trying to get rid of. This Council deserves credit for saying we've had enough.

Councilmember Carter stated that she appreciated everyone being at the meeting to provide input. It will be very helpful. Even though she was resentful that we used Arts Center money to build a park to the east of the Arts Center, there will be a huge opportunity to transfer a lot of the events that are currently happening at Tempe Beach Park to that arts park. That's approximately 12 acres, so we have essentially doubled the size of open space and that will be open next fall. That will serve us well.

**Lucy Logan, Tempe**, added that there was supposed to be bicycle facilities encircling the entire Tempe Town Lake and all the way to the western border, but she doesn't see those facilities. It's practically impossible to have access on the north side of the Lake. Even though that could be considered a bicycle-friendly area if there were bicycle facilities, there should be some parking so that residents could access that area. That should be explored. Also, concerning access to Papago Park, there is opportunity for park facilities there that are not being used. She also thought the riparian area should have hiking and mountain bike trails. Currently, it's inviting, but it is clear that you aren't supposed to go down there, so she hoped that happens. She further thought that the arts area could also be used for some overflow from Tempe Beach Park, especially art type festivals.

Mayor Hallman responded that it would be nice to have everything done now, but it does take time. For example, some of the bike routes planned for this area are completed. We have \$3.4M of the approximately \$5M needed for the pedestrian and bike bridge over the west end dam. Unfortunately for all of us, the City of Phoenix had to replace a sewer line on the north side of the Lake and for a huge period of time, about 18 months, the north side has been torn up. It is not our fault. We can't stop a fellow municipality from using its easement and replacing a sewer line. Those kinds of things happen. It was unexpected that the water Mesa is pumping into the riverbed to the east would stop precipitating into the ground and end up with 15M gallons a day flowing into the lake which is causing quality problems, so we are now spending about \$2M for the pipe-around to get the water around the Lake. It has an advantage, though. We now have 15M gallons of water a day to use for things that will advance our causes. For example, we can divert some of that water to the Karsten Golf Course and help them reduce their costs and we will use it for the riparian area to the west.

**Andrea Esquer, Tempe**, added, on behalf of the Parks Board, that the park to the east of the Arts Center was genius. Regarding the property that has had a few RFPs to address youth and amateur sports, the Board feels it is very important that that area continues to be designated for youth and amateur sports. They got a list of the fields that are used in the City for youth and amateur sports and adult sports, and the City is hurting for field space. The kids in Tempe don't have places to go to play soccer or softball. This is a prime area that will take some of the strain off the neighborhood parks and will also take care of some of the issues in the neighborhoods. The Parks Board hopes that Council will continue to maintain this as youth and amateur sports.

Mayor Hallman added that the ultimate drawing for this site was due to the Parks Board's concept of needing more fields and our examination of other places in other cities where fields are constructed, which are typically not in the most desired real estate--under power lines, next to industrial plants, near airports, precisely because other facilities don't want to locate there. This property (he showed a drawing) is 50 acres and was designed for a youth concept. We put out an RFP, we had a respondent, we thought we were in the last throes of getting the project going when the whole thing fell apart. What we have heard from our community on the youth and amateur sports side, and again we are just talking about west of Priest, (and it doesn't include SRP's 18 acres) is that this is one of the highest needs we have in our community. Our soccer fields of flat grass are absolutely overrun and have reached their capacity. Our tourism folks will tell you that if we build these kinds of fields, we will continue to see substantial expansion in our youth and amateur sports tourism activities. There are hundreds of thousands of kids whose families follow them to soccer tournaments throughout the year and use these kinds of facilities. In addition, it is very flexible space—flat grass can be used for lots of things such as other kinds of special events. Is there any serious objection to continuing to move forward with this kind of vision, even using a market approach? An RFP requires bidders to put in bids and we control the market in this regard. We designate the kinds of use but can still take advantage of the market to seek the highest and best use, given the kinds of uses we want to put this land to. If that's an acceptable notion, can I ask, is there serious objection to continuing to seek a youth and amateur sports that helps get us these kinds of fields with some indoor facilities that might be useful?

**Ms. Esquer** responded that she thought the only concern the Parks Board would have would be that the reason these RFPs have not worked out is that financing for this type of facility is extremely difficult to get. The Board would encourage Council to consider a private/public

partnership to help find financing. She doubted whether it would be successful with the market generating something on its own. The last proposal was a really good proposal and the company had a good reputation in other states, but the financing fell through. That's the Parks Board's only concern. Her concern, being on the Parks Board, is that Council will get frustrated that RFP after RFP go out and nothing happens and then Council might start considering other uses for this area and the Board does not want to see that.

Councilmember Mitchell explained that, in terms of the last project, it was a public/private partnership. Just because that one didn't happen, doesn't mean there aren't others out there. It's just finding the right partner. We talk about experiences and what we've learned. Tempe has a rich history of investing toward the future. By doing so, we have helped determine and create a market. You can say that about Rio Salado. It took more than 30 years to get the Rio Salado to what it is today. We helped create the market and we're ready for the market. The same thing happened with the downtown. Companies come here and look for quality-of-life opportunities and we have been very successful at that. He didn't want to cut us short and not have a vision looking for things such as an arts-related project or youth and amateur sports. We help set the vision and we will help create and determine what the market outcome could be. Many of us in this room grew up here and you see where we are today because this Council and past Councils have made decisions that looked toward the future. We have a lot of projects that have come to fruition because of the public/private partnership and some of those are in the room today.

**Mark Lymer** stated that he was in agreement with Councilmember Mitchell and he supported the notion of public planning. This process is really important and when a plan is achieved, we need to ask our boards and commissions to stand behind those plans. The Rio Salado Project would be miles ahead had we tried to follow a plan and not just knee-jerk reactions to the market. The vision is very important. In regard to the Mayor's specific question about the use of amateur sports fields in that location, he has heard a lot of positive things and he thought it has a lot of potential. His big concern is air quality, but he thought it's a problem that can be solved if we can work with the airport. He lives in this area and oftentimes smells jet fuel when he leaves his house in the morning and he doesn't think it's right to have young athletes out there breathing that air.

Councilmember Mitchell added that the last bid that went through for a sports facility was a mixed use project. It had indoor facilities as well as some outdoor facilities. A lot of it is indoor with basketball and volleyball leagues. The challenge is to have a multi-use complex and to make sure we have some of those amenities to help relieve some of the neighborhood park issues.

**Steve Martin, Childsplay** stated that Childsplay will be the primary tenant in the new Center for the Arts, performing 39 to 40 weeks per year and bringing families and children to the Lake. There's a synergy all across the Lake that will go on with the sports issue, families, young people and the arts, and it will be a terrific opportunity. When we speak about a private developer going into this space, are we talking about "pay to play"?

Mayor Hallman responded that we are not.

**Steve Martin** continued that Childsplay is actually a beneficiary of a terrific opportunity between the City and a non-profit. Going into Mitchell School and being able to raise the money, and the support we got from the City turning a storage facility in the middle of a neighborhood into a thriving arts opportunity for young people has been outstanding. We know that it can work and we encourage more of those projects.

**Kirby Spitler, Tempe**, voiced a concern from the audience regarding the environmental issues. Can we be assured that there will be an environmental impact study? That would provide a basis for whether or not to build there.

Councilmember Carter responded that she asked for a report from staff as to what can feasibly be built on that property. It used to be a landfill and we know the problems with the SRP parcel. Realistically, how can high can we go and how expensive would it be to build anything there?

**Chris Anaradian, Development Services Manager**, responded that there are environmental problems on the property to the west of Priest. In some ways that makes ball fields more feasible, but when staff did the previous RFPs, they felt it was feasible to build buildings on certain areas. It will take remediation. It is an old landfill, so there will be a cost. The City is the owner, so we will have to deal with that remediation either through a private entity or through our own resources. The SRP site has some environmental issues. In the short term, it makes it suitable for parking, capping, and landscaping if remediation proves to be too costly. Staff thinks it is developable and it can be developed over time, but parking, ball fields and a certain amount of building could be done.

Mayor Hallman added that the Vortac was consensually moved to that site to assist our neighbors to the west. The Vortac used to be at Price Road where the 101/202 freeways come together, so we are looking to their good faith to help us deal with that. That does impose some height restrictions on that site, however. The site across the river bottom, where the stadium was proposed, and ultimately was the reason we stopped, had an agreement that said that 120 feet was as high as we could go on that SRP site. On this site, I think the height is something like 30 to 40 feet. That's why a youth and amateur sports facility here makes some sense. In the last RFP we were looking at an indoor basketball/volleyball facility.

**Todd Marshall, Tempe**, asked if this discussion is about this being an arts district, how would that relate to the Farmer Arts District? There was an article in the paper yesterday and that that may be low-income housing now. He didn't know if those two arts districts would be coordinated or integrated, or if they would be two separate competing arts districts.

Mayor Hallman responded that it was probably a misnomer. It was an RFP for a residential buffer zone between the downtown and the neighborhoods to the west. The fact that the developer chose the name "Farmer Arts" has to do with the property uses they would like to see go forward north of Fifth Street. We have a large parking lot at Fifth Street and Farmer. Immediately adjacent to that they have already worked with the owners of the properties to the north to put in arts related uses. In fact, the final proposal was to put in affordable housing from University to somewhere along Sixth Street and some pay-to-play housing between Sixth and Fifth, then some transition housing from Fifth to Fourth, and then the arts district concepts that will fit with the Center for the Arts around the corner.

Councilmember Shekerjian added that in the Farmer Arts District there is the library, as well as a ribbon park that will extend from University all the way down to provide some urban open space for walkways and biking. Unfortunately, when she and Councilmember Ellis became councilmembers, they were plopped in the middle of this. They received from the Rio Salado Advisory Commission via email the recommendations from the Commission on December 5, 2006. These recommendations include much of what we have talked about and it is all consistent. The theme is even consistent with Vice Mayor Hutson's remarks about the market. I know that Mr. Spitler is very concerned about green. The Rio Salado Advisory Commission recommended that sensitive environmental planning be utilized. She chairs the Education and Technology Advancement Committee and there are current efforts on the part of the City to work with ASU's Sustainability College to find ways to use their research and personnel to help us better utilize the idea of sustainability, which is what we talk about in terms of being "green." The comments you are making are valid and are important to Council. What she is hearing today regarding the property west of Priest is not inconsistent. She isn't hearing opposing views. When we talk about open space, one of the definitions she has heard being floated around is that it is accessible to the public. If we were to build or have built an indoor sports facility, which could also house things that bridge athletic events with arts, such as drum corps, would that be considered open? Would that be considered an open space? She thought it does.

Mayor Hallman clarified that we are talking about uses that provide public access and availability for public uses, including youth and amateur sports programs, either indoor or outdoor. We're not talking about residential or even a hotel on this site, or a commercial or industrial project. Is that generally what we are all saying?

There was consensus.

**Mark Lymer** added, regarding the airport, this falls within the 65 LDM contour. Inside 65 LDM, there are scientific reports that say children get ear damage, brain damage, and behavior problems. Secondly, the most recent reports, private and public, state that takeoffs are primarily 60% going east at night, and yet they are supposed to be 50/50. Currently, there are about 560,000 flights in and out of Sky Harbor per year. In 15 to 20 years, they want to be at about 750,000 to 760,000. It's not going to get better. Sky Harbor will be there for several generations.

Mayor Hallman summarized that first, we had our conversation about open space/public use and that it could be indoor or outdoor facilities. Someone raised the point whether that precludes some kind of commercial, retail, or other business use of those sites. Concerning sustainability, many of the people in this room are focused on creating more sustainable communities. The Rio Salado project today is very different from the project that was proposed in 1966. It was a low water use project that had a stream running through the middle of it, with small ponding in the riverbeds, for example. That was one model. There was a second model that had even less water use, and a third model that had a high water use. That high water use model had only a quarter of the water use that this current facility has. It's important to understand how things progress over time. By the same token, please keep in mind that this project still is one of the more sustainable recreational projects ever built because the amount of water used currently by the entire Rio Salado Project, where 2.6M people currently gather yearly, is the equivalent of two golf courses. If you maximize play on a large golf course, you

will get about 80,000 rounds per year. That's 160,000 rounds played by a maximum of four people, so you are looking at something like 640,000 people accessing that site. We are four times that size in use already and there's no need to add a lot more water here. If we take that 15M gallons of water Mesa is donating to our community, we can use that for the grasslands that we might want to build for those soccer fields. Also, we've finished the study and are now getting right-of-way to take the Kyrene Water Reclamation Plant result and pipe it from that plant to the Lake. The water coming out of that plant through an almost reverse osmosis system is essentially drinking-water quality water and could then be put back into the lake as a water regeneration program. We won't yet get credit for it but that way we can reuse that water. The next step we hope will be to take water out of the Lake and use that to water, for example, Rolling Hills Golf Course and the other parks in the area. All of that is part of the sustainable model that many of you don't even know about. That's all the work that is currently being undertaken as one example. Also understand that the downtown model we are building is hugely about sustainability. Most of us have complained about the sprawl that is destroying the Valley as millions of people come in and more desert land surrounding us is bulldozed to asphalt and concrete. We are not destroying more desert. We are using less resources by people who want to live in a tower than it takes to take a square mile and house those same 800 homes. That's all fairly responsible and we don't, as a community, get nearly the credit we deserve. We are the leader right now in creating a sustainable community. Two years ago we held a special program during the height of the drought, which is still going on, to talk about these very issues. Those are things that are going on. So as we are going forward, this Council is very well aware of sustainable issues. Another example of thinking that's a little outside our scope today but that you should know about, concerns the public accessibility to the Lake. There's probably not a single person here who wouldn't like us to continue seeking a way to recreate Tempe Beach Park, for example, as a swimming hole to increase the public's accessibility to the water. What are the hurdles? The hurdles, given the property we are trying to plan, involve water quality. Our Water Department will pipe to the other end of the Lake the water that Mesa is dumping in that causes our water quality problems. We know now that the Lake can sustain full body contact. Why? There are 2,000 Ironman athletes who get into that Lake every single year. Wouldn't it be the right thing to do to get the County, which is our biggest hurdle at the moment, to allow us to take down a segment of the cut-off wall, for example, in front of Hayden Ferry Lakeside on the beach which is currently mostly thought of as private, although it's called Giuliano Park? Wouldn't it be nice to take out a chunk of that cut-off wall like we did on the north side of the Lake at the boat ramp, dump sand there and during the summers have an open swimming area to reactivate that park land in exactly the way it was created in the first place in the late 1800's through the 1930's? We can do that. That creates a more sustainable community and activates that park for us. Those kinds of ideas are out there.

Mayor Hallman asked whether those are the kinds of things we want to pursue?

There was audience consensus.

Mayor Hallman asked, concerning commercialism, whether it necessarily means that we can't have retail or other commercial elements built within these parcels. The RFP that went out for the Center for the Arts was intentionally designed to help us bring arts uses next to the Arts Center to start creating arts-related uses. That, by its nature, must be commercial. Is that within what you conceive of the use of these properties? The same would be true for an RFP for the recreational piece. To get enough money to do this, we're talking tens of millions dollars.

We have to have the private sector help pay for some of this because they have some profit coming out of it. Is it precluded in your mind that we have a partner on the recreational side build the building and run basketball and volleyball tournaments? That's what we came up with which includes all of those fields around it. Is that acceptable? In the arts park part of this, is it acceptable that we seek to attract arts and arts uses to begin building arts-related uses adjacent to that?

There was a question about whether we are going to put in large structures or whether it is going to be integrated with the Rio Salado Commission's idea of having open space. The plans that were shown before with the RFP included structures that were going to be quite hefty, almost like warehouses, and it is important to look at what sort of structures are going to be developed, who will use them, whether it is something that will be used by commercial artists, or whether it is going to be available in any way to Tempe residents.

Mayor Hallman responded that his perspective of this Council's consensus through that process was that the goal had been to weave arts uses into that site that would honor the notion that there would be public areas of public plazas that could be enjoyed, that this was not to be a heavily-used site that covered every square foot. He asked if that was essentially Council's idea.

Council agreed.

Mayor Hallman continued that because the responses received did not necessarily honor that vision and that is part of the reason we are here today. Council wanted to look at this again.

**Mark Richardson, Tempe**, Executive Director of Arizona Academy of Performing Arts. The Arizona Academy of Performing Arts was invited to the presentations late in the process. They were excited to know there might be an opportunity for a young organization like theirs to find a home in terms of office, performance and rehearsal space. Today he's hearing concerns that the flow of traffic be enabled throughout the development, and as an arts organization, what is exciting is the attractiveness of the public to come see what we do on a daily basis, to open up space that allows us to open the community's eyes to draw a connection with the Rio Salado areas to the new arts facility. What we didn't hear in those two RFP presentations was a lot of involvement from the youth, and as a youth organization, they would like to make sure that is part of the planning for whatever it may be as an arts district.

Mayor Hallman added that in 1999, the arts park was being designated as a parking lot and he, Councilmember Arredondo, Joseph Lewis, and Joe Spracale put their feet down and said that it would destroy the City's ability to connect to the arts areas and that it would ultimately undermine everything we are trying to do. That gave rise to the arts park. He wanted the arts center where the Tempe Center for Habilitation site was, but he lost that fight. It's still going to be a fabulous facility in a spectacular location. When it is woven together with the arts park, it all makes sense. Understand, these conversations are what help us find our way to these solutions.

An audience member stated that the overall vision is very important. Concerning commercial use with the open space, it is critical for these to be vital, energetic, synergistic masterplans. We have to remember how big this area is and how hot it gets in the summer. To try to connect

all these functions with just open space, it just has to have shade intensity. It's not about connecting the neighborhood to the Lake, but also the lateral east/west connections that these facilities have to weave both directions. Even if we have the open space all the way to the west, the critical nature of the SRP piece has to be woven in and we need to think about how it faces on to the east face of the fields. It can't be just the sports field, just the SRP piece. There is also the notion of a gateway. When you come across the bridge, it will act as a formal gateway. The concern about just parking lots or just sports fields at that edge is a concern. We need to think about what we're saying when we enter our community.

Mayor Hallman added that, for example, the notion that the land immediately adjacent to Priest Road should become a solar field, even though that might be a nice element to have for the sustainability to the community, that may not be the kind of entry you're looking for. He would argue that nice flat grass isn't so bad, but we need to be focused on what that look ultimately is. For a huge number of people, the Papago Park Center isn't the entry into Tempe, it's when they come south on the Priest Road bridge, and we don't have much of a gateway there now.

**George Scovas, Valley of the Sun YMCA**, thanked the Mayor and Council for their vision for this great project. They deal with about 25,000 youth every Saturday and right now they are turning kids away because they can't find the gyms and the fields for participants. Schools can now charge whatever they want for use of facilities. Council's vision is a great vision and to get all the families to come to a huge complex would be a tremendous plus for this community.

Councilmember Shekerjian asked for clarification that when they schedule practices and games, are they heavily on the weekends or are they finding that they don't have practice facilities during the week.

Mr. Scovas responded that it is both. For practice on weeknights, they have 12 YMCAs across the valley, and for them to service members and recreation facilities, they have to open them up to the whole community. They are dissecting a gym into four little sections with 20 kids, parents and coaches, trying to come up with some kind of practice and that doesn't work. On weekends, they are doing all of their games on Saturdays. They will probably have to move to Fridays or Sundays.

Councilmember Shekerjian asked for clarification on the school districts charging whatever they want. Are they now moving away from those facilities and not being able to use them?

Mr. Scovas responded that they are paying them the market rate. They are trying to fill as many gyms as quickly as possible. Even ASU is struggling with their basketball program to have a place to practice, so they are going over to the Glendale facility to find space.

Mayor Hallman added that an example of a public/private partnership would be the YMCA, ASU, and City of Tempe. We've got the dirt, you guys pull together a building, and there's a successful option.

An audience member asked if Council has given any thought to the children and adults who are interested in not just looking at art and walking through sculpture gardens, but a space for those people to do art. It's when people DO art that they become the supporters of it. You don't get

that from just seeing it. We need a place for them to experience it. The elementary schools in Tempe do not have art teachers. Are we considering this at all?

Mayor Hallman responded that it is being considered.

Councilmember Shekerjian responded that she chairs the Education and Technology Advancement Committee and sits as a member on the Neighborhood Quality of Life, Public Safety and Parks and Recreation Committee. The member who serves on the Education and Technology Advancement Committee is Councilmember Carter and she, in turn, chairs the Arts and Community Services Committee. We feel that's a good partnership for exactly what you are talking about. If you look at the research, the aging baby boomers are not going to be satisfied with merely being audiences. They want to be actively participating, so her work plan talks about promoting participation in the arts for all ages. The City provides a lot of money to the elementary school districts to provide artists in residence, for example, and there are some other programs we would like to see, such as the art masterpiece program which provides art history and elements of art to teach children how to be an artist. We are very sensitive to that, but it is something we are looking at on her committee. She appreciated the comments. We are providing this wonderful Center for the Arts because observance is important, but you really can't appreciate unless you have the opportunity to participate.

Councilmember Carter stated that when she first ran in 2000, she had an idea of taking Mitchell School and turning it into an arts incubator, specifically so struggling artists could have offices, galleries and, in turn, would then give back to the community as far as arts classes, etc. The original plan for the Center for the Arts had an educational component, a ring that went from the west side all the way around to the east side on the south part of the Center which was for classroom space and offices for arts groups. Because we felt we were stretching the limits of what we were asking as far the tax, we dropped that and hoped that someday we would be able to go there. When the arts district came up, she thought this was an opportunity for us to fill some of those needs. In her own visioning, she would like to see artists' studios with their offices on top. She would like to see some open public rooms because the City's cultural staff does not have enough space. We lease space from the School for the Arts to hold some of our classes. That's part of her vision for that arts space and she is hopeful that Childsplay in their new facility at Mitchell School will also open the doors to some of these arts organizations.

**Mr. Burge** stated he was speaking on behalf of the Arts Commission, but was also making a personal observation. He felt what is being experienced currently is just the beginning, and he would anticipate that there will be an explosion in appreciation of the arts and sports. This community is rather unique. It's a leader, not just locally, but nationally. If you think the pressure is big now, just wait until the Center for the Arts opens. There will be a tremendous amount of pressure to meet the demand and they will be looking to the City for leadership. He encouraged Council, in this visionary process, to think carefully.

Mayor Hallman added that it was important to remember that we also have to find the resources for those things. That's why we have this tension about how much we can build and how we're going to get other peoples' money to build.

**Therese Lucier, Tempe** added that one of her concerns is that by the time the execution comes around, things have changed dramatically. It is her request that we look at some sort of

citizen oversight and involvement in the actual budgetary process and that we work hand-in-hand with Council to ensure that these fabulous visions actually become part of the development. It is very easy to sell this stuff away. We don't have any open space in any of the new developments coming on line. We would like to avoid that in the future by citizen oversight in the budgetary process.

Mayor Hallman stated that he disagreed completely. We are undergoing a process using the parks and public space group out of New York and he invited everyone to participate again in the downtown visioning efforts for the open space. As others have said, great cities are not known by their buildings, but the spaces between them and it is that model that we have been following. That's why, for example, the Farmer Arts District has very clear nodes designated for buildings and a ribbon park and a library as part of that facility. We are paying for the public spaces of it using the proceeds of the development that is paying for the private sector's pieces. We are talking about the fact that unlike any other large metropolitan area in the country, the Rio Salado project is part of more than 2,000 acres of public and open space. He has been working with some of his colleagues for more than two years to get our surrounding cities to help us plan that holistically so that we create the vision and protect and preserve it. There are others who use the words "redevelop Papago Park." To him, that's against what we are trying to achieve. What we are about is developing Athens. The Greek notion of a society and city that combines all of the quality of elements that make up a great life, including the academic, recreational, artistic, intellectual, and spiritual is what we are about, and this City is closest to achieving that great vision than almost any other in the country. There's a reason we were just designated by the AAA as one of the top places to visit in the world. That is something you should all take great pride in. He asked every member of the staff to stand and be acknowledged, because while Council is giving up their time because they are committed to the community, staff has jobs to do and they still give up even more of their time and commit themselves to making this the best place to live, work and play and go to school, raise a family and have a business.

Applause.

**Ms. Esquer** noted that the question about whether putting a building on this youth and amateur sports piece would be a good idea was addressed. We do consider that open space and we do consider it public access. She felt there were two benefits. It doubles the field space available to Tempe kids who need places to play, and it also relieves some of the strain on the neighborhood parks. The Parks Board has had this discussion many times.

**Mr. Lymer** asked whether an arena or complex would have food.

Mayor Hallman clarified that public space include the elements that provides services and goods that people would want while they are enjoying the facilities. He asked whether that was generally what had been talked about.

**Mr. Martin** thought Mr. Lymer's points needed to be amplified. They met with one of the developers in the previous RFP's late in the process, and when they told them they would be bringing 100,000 young people and families to the Center for the Arts every year, they had no idea. Their whole concept for that arts center was evening gowns and tuxedos and when they said shorts and tennis shoes, he didn't know what to say. He said they needed to go back to

the drawing board and look at it. It was very late in the process. He would like to put it out there again to say this is a family venue and they will plan to bring 1,000 kids each week, and school buses for the entire school year. It needs to be understood that there are opportunities that need to be taken advantage of there. The developer needs to know this.

Councilmember Shekerjian reiterated that is why everyone is here today. Whatever we decide to do, the vision needs to come from the community and we take that vision and craft it into an RFP for people to respond to. It really shouldn't matter to anybody in this audience who implements our community vision. It shouldn't matter who the developer is. What should matter is what that vision is and that's why we're here today.

A concern was voiced about the degree of pollution and sound that would affect those fields. He wanted to know from Council what the alternative would be. If we're not to build those open fields in that area and instead put them elsewhere, what other options are there for open fields that would not subject them to the pollution and noise from the airport. What other options would there be to use that land if we didn't use it for open fields?

Mayor Hallman responded that the issue had been raised that if this land is not appropriate for what we are looking at, it could be used for other things, using a market approach to get cash to build elsewhere. In terms of other location opportunities, that's outside the scope of this meeting. He founded the Tempe Aviation Commission and he has eight file drawers full of aviation material, and staff is well aware of the over-flight and other issues. We still have to work a lot of detail before any decisions get made. All of that is part of the analysis to determine what can work here. Before you conclude that the noise or air pollution is too concentrated, all that should be determined. If it becomes determined that it is inappropriate as a use, then we have to look at other options for the use of that area. For example, the 25 acres south of that ultimately got turned into a commercial/industrial park which generated \$9M now going to pay for park amenities throughout Tempe Beach Park and elsewhere. It might be the case that a portion of that land is inappropriate and it could be commercialized, again, as an example, for a building across the street that could actually serve as a sound buffer. A lot of the noise that inhabits this site is coming from aircraft takeoff. Those are things we have to investigate. So he wouldn't conclude that it is the case that this is a bad site. Our point today is to make sure we are on the right track of investigation in seeking the right kind of uses. If it doesn't work, we will come back and look for other things we could do.

**Bruce Stomper, Tempe**, asked what the 1,000 kids being bused into the Center for the Arts going to be doing? Is it going to be hands-on, or will they just be looking at art?

Mayor Hallman responded that Childsplay's programs are hands-on, but essentially it is a theater production group that provides live theater to students, many of whom don't have an opportunity to see that.

**Mr. Stomper** added that he would like to see some hard data on the noise levels and pollution.

Mayor Hallman responded that all of that has been part of the analysis and a lot of material is available.

Butler: What are we going to be doing between Priest Road maintenance yard and the 12 acres?

**Mr. Spitler** added that he has it processed in his own mind what's going to happen with the previous arts site for the former RFP. He would love to see these artists come back to the site. Whichever one can bring us the Tempe artists, that's the most important thing to him. The whole intent of bringing those artists to the site was a wonderful idea and whatever it takes to get them there, he would support.

**Ms. Lucier** stated that the developments she was speaking of where we have lost all of our open space are the current three developments being built right there. She wasn't talking about Rio Salado and this process. She was talking about budget oversight and envisioning the percentages we establish, instead of saying we would like to see them included, which we didn't get at the site on University and Ash and the new 300 foot building on University by ASU. She was not talking about our process here today, but about what we didn't get in the last major building developments. That's where she would like to see budget oversight and percentages developed.

Mayor Hallman responded that there is budgetary oversight. That's why these seven people are elected and if someone would like to be part of that, run for office. We also have a year-long budget and finance committee process that involved five representatives from the community who applied to go through the budget line by line, and this added \$6M in enhancements for the community. We also have opportunities with the Parks Board, the Rio Salado Advisory Commission and the Municipal Arts Commission, all of which give input to help Council make these decisions and they provide input as to how we should spend our money. With respect to private properties, we are somewhat constrained on what we can force people to do, and they have a right to develop their properties. In those discussions in the last two years, we received substantial benefits for the community in ways we have never tried before. The Centerpoint project, for example, includes substantial public plaza and arts space, as well as community-desired retail, in addition to about \$3.2M in cash benefits for public parking, traffic calming, a traffic plan, and affordable housing. The number one problem we continue to hear about in our downtown is parking, and so for the next project that was mentioned, we have about \$6M in additional public parking spaces that are being built. In addition, on February 26 through 28, we are having a downtown public process to plan the public spaces and assure that they are all connected together and that we continue to have the most desired public space and pedestrian friendly area in this region. He appreciated Ms. Lucier's views, but we still have to build a community vision.

Councilmember Carter stated that in the hour that remained, she would like to throw something out to address. She suggested forming an ad hoc committee to solidify a vision for both of these areas, either two separate committees, or a joint committee, based on all of the comments made today. People could leave names of those interested, or go back and use our Parks and Recreation Board and Arts Commission.

Mayor Hallman added, given this general sense that it is appropriate to move in this direction, that we have two Council committees---Councilmember Mitchell's committee on Tourism and Amateur Sports and the Arts and Community Services Committee--that would craft the RFP process for the arts piece. Vice Mayor Hutson's committee already met and worked up the

details on how those RFP processes should work. Those committees would then be the force with which we would take community feedback with the connection to our Rio Salado Advisory Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board for the youth and amateur sports, and our Arts Commission for the arts areas in particular, and help craft the final elements of those RFPs. Then we would go back out with appropriate RFPs on how these properties should be used with public input through that process. We can actually start taking some steps based on everything we have heard today. Does that sound like an acceptable model? There will be Minutes of this meeting and they will reflect everything that's going on here. They will then be provided to the public at large, as well as to those three commissions that are participating.

Councilmember Shekerjian asked for clarification on who is paying for those public parking spaces.

Mayor Hallman responded that the developers pay for it. In the past, we have had tried to build parking spaces one way or the other. In this instance, the developers have to do it.

Mayor Hallman reiterated that the two committees will be used as the means to craft RFPs which will be brought back to the Council Committee of the Whole for final approval with input from the boards and commissions as described. He asked if that was acceptable.

There was consensus.

There was a concern expressed by a commissioner. A joint commission meeting was held and they reviewed the proposals to give feedback to the Council. There was some discussion about actually selling the property to the developer and changing the zoning from public open space to high density mixed use. He thought that's where their concern was. Leasing it is ok, because if it doesn't work out we can always take it back.

Mayor Hallman responded that he hadn't heard that from this Council about high density mixed use.

There was a concern, in terms of responding to the two different RFPs, that there were several good things about both proposals. One was the local aspect, local architects, people who knew what was going on in the community, but the other side of it was the operations and management, which the other RFP had a better hold on. If you could get an RFP that could combine those two, then you might be able to find a successful arts related district.

Mayor Hallman responded that, with a new RFP process, we should consider throwing it open to other arts companies and organizations that might want to locate in such a site as well. The difficulty we faced in going down the road was you can't really get something moving because it's hard to get a spec facility built to accommodate unknown arts groups. It has also been hard to get a specific facility built for three specific uses and not know how you're going to handle the rest of it. Those are some of the lessons we learned in this process.

**Ed Roberts** stated that he was an arts history major and for the past 35 years has been involved in youth and amateur sports. On a regular basis I work with the Arizona Youth Soccer Association, the Arizona Softball Association, the Arizona Rugby Union, the Arizona Volleyball Association, the Arizona Pop Warner Football Federation. They will all tell you that on a regular

basis, they are constantly fighting for facilities. There aren't enough facilities out there for kids, not to mention the overloading of the neighborhood parks. Every available space is in demand. The needs that our community has right now will only expand. As they expand, we will eventually run out of property and where do our kids go? It's not only for our kids but for our adults as well.

Councilmember Arredondo thanked everyone. Someone once told him that as politicians or as elected officials, it is better to know that we were born with two ears and one mouth and sometimes it is more important to listen than to speak. He came to listen. He thought we need an environmental study done independently to find out how it would positively or negatively affect our kids. He has never seen an independent study. The safety of our youth is as valuable as anything else. He also thought we need to carry a message to our staff that it is about time we seriously look at moving the Priest Yard and find out what the cost is. We can continue to plan and plan, but nobody wants to build next to our yard. We need to send a clear message to our staff. In the beginning, He said open space and youth. To him, that means a combination of many things for the enrichment of our youth. It does not mean a single entity. He has taught and worked in the school systems, and he will say that art, music, and sports all go hand-in-hand. From his perspective, when he talks about open space, about a commitment to youth, he is talking about all of that and not one specific thing. He is walking away with good ideas.

**Gail Fisher, past Chair of Arts Commission**, added that the Tempe Center of the Arts will be a world-class building. We will get a lot of traffic from the freeway and down Priest, and the Rio Salado Parkway will become a gateway to Tempe. When we consider these different proposals, we need to look at that side, welcome people, and say they are about to drive up to something fabulous.

**Mr. Marshall** noted that he has been looking at the aerial photo, and he thought the vision for this area was decided eons ago by geology with the presence of the mountain and river. He has only been here for about 15 years, but remembers when the river was the backyard, a junkyard. When the 202 went in and everyone discovered all of this, the backyard had to become the front yard. Looking at the aerial view, it's important to remember that this is one of the last really wonderful unique pieces of landscape in Tempe.

An audience member noted that one thing that would be advantageous would be if the Rio Salado Commission, the Arts Commission and Parks Board had a chance to interact in terms of their own individual visioning goals. That has been lacking. We don't really have a chance to see all the commonalities and maybe work out something combined.

Mayor Hallman added that it was his hope that we might merge those two organizations because they bring talents from different features that ought to be shared across the Rio Salado and the Rio Salado talent shared across the rest of our Park Board.

**Mr. Burge** stated that it was necessary for the Rio Salado to have a parking plan. We have talked about it in the Rio Salado Advisory Commission for 20 years. We have more land and we have all these incredible uses, but we need a comprehensive parking plan. With any special event we realize how tough it is.

Mayor Hallman responded that Glenn Kephart and Traffic are working on a global traffic model for downtown and the surrounding areas as part of this. It's one of those things that is taking some time and is complicated.

Mr. Marshall added that when the Farmer Arts District really means a government-subsidized rental project, we need to be careful how that word is used. Ms. Lucier made the point that we are using the word "arts" in everything and every time a developer wants to do something, they call it an arts district or put the words "arts" in it, and she pointed out how there hasn't been a lot of discussion about what that really means.

Mayor Hallman stated that he left off the folks who work in the development elements. We had a Planning and Zoning Commission, a Design Review Board and a Board of Adjustment. The Design Review Board and Planning and Zoning Commission were merged together to a new Development Review Commission so we have a holistic approach to all of that. That's all volunteers like you. Lots of discussion takes place among community members about what these projects should be.

Mayor Hallman added that the Priest Yard seems to be an item left off the table. It is a piece of property on Priest Road and Rio Salado Parkway on the northeast corner. We have to start with the reality that it is environmentally challenged. It is also an actively-used facility for the City that is expensive to replace. At some time, however, it needs to be upgraded and replaced. Councilmember Arredondo made the point it is time to start studying that. Staff has been looking at it for several years and we keep coming back to the fact that it's a lot of money to fix this problem if we're going to move that and create a gateway. What he would like to ask of Council first, because this was generally a consensus reached over the years, that in order to make that work, we need to look to the private sector. This is one of those parcels that we could put out an RFP and, given its location and profile, it could then attract a private sector enterprise that could support what's going on along the Rio Salado and could generate the funds needed to actually move the facility. Is that still the direction we are looking at?

There was consensus.

Mayor Hallman stated that there would be a public process to go through, and it is the one location that may require a wholly private sector development project to generate the funds to get that moved out of there. It could be replaced by something that could provide an area of respite, of restaurant space, or other things on a first floor retail use with something above it to generate the kind of cash flow we need. That may require a fee sale because of the difficulties we face in getting it financed, although long term leasing does work in certain contexts. He asked for community comment on whether Priest Yard is a place where we would look for a private sector concept in order to be able to move this at all.

An audience member noted that it looked like it would be an ideal spot for a parking lot between the arts and the sports venue.

Mayor Hallman responded that a flat parking lot doesn't generate much, so then it would have to be a structured parking lot. He suspected most people would say that they are disappointed with the view of ASU's parking lot on Rural Road between University and Apache on the west

side. The worse use of an arterial corner is as a parking lot, and we should seek something that generates a vision and a view of a facility that could be attractive and could also include parking.

There was a question about height restrictions on that site.

Mayor Hallman responded that it would probably be something like 8 stories.

**Mr. Butler** asked whether the area, not only the Priest Yard but all of the distance between the Priest Yard and the Center for the Arts, would be potentially used for commercial art.

Mayor Hallman responded that it would be. The Center for the Arts already takes a huge chunk of that. The parcel that is left is actually about 27 acres. The community vision is that this would be arts-related uses from the Priest corner to the Arts Center, carving out the Priest Yard because that has to be dealt with separately.

**Mr. Spitler** asked where the Priest Yard could be relocated.

Mayor Hallman responded that there have been a couple of notions. Initially, we thought we could put it over on the other side of the Vortac, but that looks like it's environmentally challenged with noise and air pollution because it is so close to the airport. Other opportunities include on the east side of the new Tempe Marketplace. There is a landfill that can't be remediated, but it could be used for parking and storage, and there is land immediately north of it that potentially could be used for the Yard itself. Relocating the Priest Yard requires finding a piece of real estate, buying it and building the new facilities.

**Mayor Hallman concluded that Council now has a general notion of community vision, we have developed a process we will take forward using the two Council committees and the three commissions. With respect to the Priest Yard, it is the notion that it is acceptable that it be disposed of in a way that generates a project that will pay us and get us something better than what is there currently and pay us for the relocation.**

Councilmember Carter thanked everyone. We take all of your comments seriously. Concerning the Priest Yard, she wondered what other locations might be considered.

Mayor Hallman responded that the general comments would be that staff needs to start seriously looking at what the opportunities would be. He asked if that was a consensus.

There was consensus.

Councilmember Carter added that this is going in the right direction for all of the public property that we have left.

Councilmember Shekerjian thanked everyone, as well. Staff has been willing to be here today on their day off. It's Council's job to be here and hear what residents have to say. The public didn't have to come out and give their input. Every time she attends one of these meetings, it's another validation why she chose to live in Tempe, because there's great passion in this community to make sure that we provide the best place to live, work and play and raise a family.

Visioning sessions like this are important and she thinks this is the right process to take in terms of where we are moving.

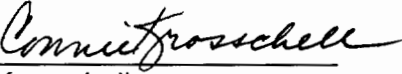
Councilmember Ellis added that she has some very strong views about the youth and amateur sports. She has young children. Any of you who have been to neighboring communities know some of the issues they have. The City of Phoenix uses ticketing people at Pecos Park as a revenue generator every Saturday because there are hundreds of tickets issued there every weekend because there is a large demand and they haven't figured out how to accommodate all of the crowds that come. She is a member of Councilmember Carter's Arts & Community Services Committee so she looks forward to helping draft part of that vision based on the thoughts expressed today. She also appreciates the talk about the gateway. She has to chuckle every time she drives into Scottsdale on Hayden with their sign and slogan that says, "the most livable city" and it's right in front of their cemetery. That probably wasn't part of their vision, but she is hoping that we're putting thought into our vision of a gateway so that we don't encounter anything like that. Finally, she urged the participants to check out the Library and the café.

Vice Mayor Hutson also thanked everyone for coming. This is one of the main reasons he is proud to be a resident of Tempe. We are different. You take the time to come here because you care about our community and that's the big difference we have between all the other cities. We have more volunteers per capita than anybody and that's because they are Tempeans and they care. It helps him get a better insight of what the residents want. He chairs, along with Councilmember Mitchell, the Finance, Economy (which is the economic development and redevelopment) and Veterans Affairs Committee. They try to make the tax dollars go as far as they can and try not to waste them. They are always trying to find a different way to help someone from outside of Tempe pay our taxes.

Councilmember Mitchell thanked everyone for attending. It is a true honor to listen and share the vision. Visioning helps Tempe's next generation and citizen input is really moving Tempe forward. We have seen the outcome of what visioning can do to a community by looking at Tempe today. Who would have thought that the river bottom would be what it is today. It is a recreational oasis. Your vision has helped Tempe be an arts community, a vision of implementing a program where developers either create an arts project or donate funds to the arts district. Out of that we have been supportive of Childsplay and other arts organizations in the community. That's truly a vision that helps set a demand and the market for the arts. The same thing goes for youth and amateur sports and sports in general. We have created the Fiesta Bowl and now that has spurred other events. Now we have the Rock 'n Roll Marathon. We broke records. We have the Ironman. It helps with our neighborhoods and community as a whole by visioning and looking towards the future and taking the investment. It is truly an investment for future generations.

Mayor Hallman summarized that he didn't think it would be easy to find another Council that does this kind of thing, actually opens the door and says "come in and talk to us." This is a very unusual thing to do. It causes great stress in organizations when we do these kinds of things. Hats off to staff in learning how to work with a Council that does some crazy stuff sometimes just to find out what we really should be doing. He thanked the citizens for their passion for the community.

**Meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.**

  
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Connie Krosschell  
Acting City Clerk